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EDWARDS STREET LABORATORY

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NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

Study Group Analysis No. 1
General Considerations in Harbor
Defense.
Distinction Between Limited and
Unlimited Warfare

26 January 1954

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There are two kinds of armed conflicts in which the United States might expect to be involved. The term "limited war" will be used to designate an outbreak such as the Korean War, in which the combatants are fighting under wraps, so to speak. A direct conflict between the United States and the USSR would be an "unlimited war". In a limited war, it is quite possible that nuclear weapons will not be used. In an unlimited war it is almost certain that they will. President Eisenhower's recent statements on the place of atomic weapons in continental defense leave no doubt that we will use them if we are attacked, and therefore the enemy is sure to use them also.

The tremendous destructive power of nuclear weapons will change the entire complexion of any war in which they are used, and therefore necessitates a substantial difference in harbor defense strategy and tactics between limited and unlimited warfare. We propose in subsequent analyses by individuals or sub-groups to discuss problems, systems of defense, and specific components of such systems, for both types of warfare.

Submitted by
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